



FAIRFAX COUNTY

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
Office of Site Development Services
12055 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5503

V I R G I N I A

July 3, 2002

02-09

TO: All Architects, Builders, Developers, Engineers and Surveyors Practicing in Fairfax County

SUBJECT: Amendments to the *The Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia*, (Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance) and the Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual related to Tree Preservation and Planting

On February 11, 2002, the Board of Supervisors adopted amendments to the Public Facilities Manual (PFM) (Chapters 2, 12 and the index), Zoning Ordinance (Articles 13, 18 and 20) and the Subdivision Ordinance (Chapter 101 of the *Code of the County of Fairfax*) (County Code). These amendments became effective on April 15, 2002.

On July 16, 2002, any plans that have not received final approval by the County, including previously grandfathered plans, must meet all new ordinance and PFM requirements, including new tree cover calculation requirements. Plans that were recommended for approval and forwarded for satisfaction of bonding and approval conditions prior to July 16th must also comply with the new provisions. In order to facilitate the processing of these plans to final approval, a letter from the submitting professional to certify that the plan meets all the new tree preservation and planting ordinance requirements will be required. Plans that do not meet the new requirements will be subject to disapproval.

The adopted amendments to the PFM update and clarify: the tree cover requirements in terms of the calculations; the selection of trees and other vegetation to be preserved; the procedures for mitigating damages to off-site trees; and the procedures for mitigating the impact on the Resource Protection Areas. The adopted amendments eliminate additional canopy credits for trees preserved in Resource Protection Areas and floodplains, and eliminate the automatic deduction for building areas in determining the tree cover requirement for subdivisions. In addition, the adopted amendments provide new incentives for the preservation of certain existing trees, using native and desirable tree species, and for planting trees that provide energy conservation.

The adopted amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance emphasize the use of existing and new trees to satisfy the tree cover requirement; remove the methodology for determining tree cover in order to centralize it in the PFM; and clarify the modification process to allow a modification of the tree cover requirement in instances where development is proposed on a site devoid of trees and where the strict provisions of the tree cover requirement would preclude reasonable use of the lot. The Zoning Ordinance includes a third modification provision for additions to or modifications of existing structures or uses.

On nonbonded grading plans submitted pursuant to Chapter 104 of the County Code, requests for tree cover modification may now be included in the plan narratives (PFM 12-0702.2K). To expedite plan review, these modification requests must be submitted and approved prior to the formal submission of the grading plan.

If you have any questions concerning the approved amendments, please contact Mike Knapp, Director, Urban Forestry Division, at (703) 324-1770.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE ON ORIGINAL

Michelle A. Brickner, Director
Office of Site Development Services

cc: John Wesley White, Director, DPWES
Zofia A. Zager, Director, Office of Building Code Services, DPWES
Mike Knapp, Director, Urban Forestry Division, OSDS, DPWES